

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

**APPLICANT(S):** Robert J. Allen et al.  
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**FOR:** A FRAMEWORK FOR HIERARCHICAL VLSI DESIGN

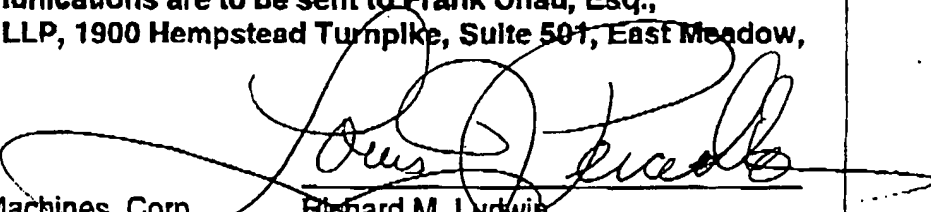
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